

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE

Nature,
Series,
and
Order } of Occurrences :

As they are prophetically represented in the 11 Chap. of the *Revelation*.



By *W. A.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishop's Head*
in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, 1689.



A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Nature, Series, and Order
of Occurrences, &c.

FOR our better understanding the nature and order of the things prophetically represented in the *11th* of the *Revelation*, the first thing observable is, the Order of Time, in which the Occurrences mentioned from *ver. 1.* to *ver. 14.* of that Chapter, were show'd unto St. *John* in Vision, and there placed in their Order: And that Time is between the beginning and ending of the sixth Trumpet.

In Chap. 9. v. 13. the sixth Trumpet sounded; and a considerable part of the Event of that Trumpet is set down in the following Verses to the end of that Chapter, which Expositors understand to be meant of the Turks Conquering and possessing themselves of the Eastern part of the Roman Empire: and the Calamities caused thereby were a great part of the second wo, which was the wo of that Trumpet. The design of which Judgment of God upon the Empire, was to awaken the Inhabitants thereof, and especially those of the Western Empire (upon whom that storm had not fallen, or but very little of it) and to excite them to repent of the work of their hands, such as was their worshipping of Devils or Demons, and Idols of Gold, Silver, Brass, Stone and Wood, and of their Murders, Sorceries, Fornications and Thefts, *ver. 20.* But this Judgment produced no such good effect, for they repented not, as appears, *ver. 21.*

Whereupon in *Chap. 10. 1.* another mighty

mighty Angel comes down from Heaven with a little Book open in his hand: and he cryed with a loud Voice as when a Lion roareth. And when he had so done, seven thunders uttered their Voices. But St. *John* was forbidden to write what those thunders uttered. But in as much as this Lion-like roaring of the Angel, and also these thundering Voices fall in here, upon the declared impenitency of the Western Empire, upon whom the former plague, which had befallen the Eastern, had not much lighted; it is highly probable, that those thundering Voices contained matter of dreadful import against the Western Empire especially. And it seems likely by what next follows, that the reason why those terrible things uttered by the thundering Voices, were at that time sealed up, might be, because the execution of them was not to fall out under this sixth Trumpet, but under the seventh; and therefore not so proper to be declared under the sixth Trumpet, otherwise

A. A Discourse of the Nature

therwise than by hints and intimations in general. And indeed *Biblia Regia, Andreas*, and others, render the Angels words from the Original thus: *Seal up those things which the seven thunders have uttered, and thou shalt write them hereafter* (not, and write them not) as the Author of the Notes, framed out of the Expositions of Dr. *H. More*, has observed upon the place. Some lighter Plagues were to befall this Empire, under this sixth Trumpet, in order still to their amendment, if possible; But those failing of that end, the greater stroke which will make an end of that power by which the Church had so long suffered, is reserved to the times of the seventh Trumpet. And therefore under that Trumpet it is more particularly and expressly declared to St. *John* by Vision, *That the time of Gods wrath will then be come, in which he will destroy them which had destroy'd the earth*: Which Visional Prophecy is accompanied with Voices and thunders as here, and with lightning, and Earthquake

and Order of Occurrences. 5

Earthquake and great hail, *Chap. 11. 18, 19.*

And that the things here uttered by the thunders and the execution of those things did appertain to the time of the seventh Trumpet, is still the more likely, not to say apparent; because that which next and immediately follows upon those seven thunders and the sealing of them up, is a most solemn Oath which the Angel took, That there should be delay of time no longer for execution of those things, but only until the days of the seventh Angel when he should sound, but that then the Mystery of God shall be finished which had been declared to the Prophets concerning the full and final destruction of the Enemies of the Church, and the glorious enlargement and exaltation of the Church it self, as is further to be shewn when we come to the seventh Trumpet.

I here make use of that reading [there shall be delay of time no longer] because I find several Expositors prefer

6. *A Discourse of the Nature*

fer it before that other reading [*there shall be time no longer*] and because also it best suits with the scope of the place, and the coherent Verses. Though 'tis true, the common reading duly considered, signifies the same thing the other does, though it does not so plainly express it. For according to that reading, the time when God will finish his mystery declared to the Prophets, shall be no longer but till the days of the seventh Angel, when he shall sound.

After this St. *John* is bid to take the little Book out of the Angels hand, and to eat it; and when he had done so, the Angel told him he must prophesie again, to wit, what should further befall the Empire under the sixth Trumpet and the seventh also, besides what he had prophesied of already. And accordingly the very next things he prophesied of after he had eaten the little Book, are the Occurrences set down between the first and 14th ver. of Chap. II. Which things were to fall out in whole or
in

and Order of Occurrences. 7

in part, in the times of the sixth Trumpet: Which appears in that the period of those times falls after those Occurrences, as we find at the 14. ver. the second wo is past, meaning then, and not till then.

And therefore though the first Vision we meet with after it was said to St. *John*, thou must prophesie again, which concerns the measuring of the Temple, the leaving unmeasured the outward Court thereof, and concerning the prophesying of the two Witnesses 1260 days, does commence as high as from the first stated defection, corruption and degeneracy of a great part of the Church; yet this Vision being seen by St. *John*, under his Vision of the sixth Trumpet (as it is manifest it was) that Visional Prophecy must in all reason receive its fulfilling and accomplishment in part, in times of the sixth Trumpet. For this I take as a sure rule, That the fulfilling the Visions in whole or in part, received under each of the seven Trumpets, does belong to the times

8. *A Discourse of the Nature*

times of those Trumpets under which St. *John* had those Visions, unless there be some plain intimation to the contrary. As there was when St. *John* had a Vision under the sixth Trumpet concerning the finishing of the mystery of God under the seventh; for the nature of the Vision was an expresse Declaration of it, *Chap.* 10. 7. And the nature of the Vision of the holy Cities being trodden under foot 42 propheticall Months, and the Witnesses Propheying in Sack-Cloth 1260 propheticall days, will not admit of a compleat fullfilling of them in less time than six of the seven Trumpets will take up, or very near it; and therefore could be fullfilled but in part under the sixth Trumpet; and in part they were fullfilled under each of the five former Trumpets.

Under these limitations I think we may take it for a general rule which will always hold true, That the several Visions of the Trumpets will be fullfilled in the times of those Trumpets under which they were seen. To deny

and Order of Occurrences. 9

deny this is to deny the proper end and use of the seven Trumpets, which are as so many signs by which to know the succession, place and order of the several Events of the several Visions under those Trumpets. Without which we should be at a loss to know what time or age of the World the things signified by such or such a Vision might be expected, or to understand when such Visional Prophecies were fullfilled when they are past.

I have said thus much to show why we should not think that the reason why St. *John* was told by the Angel that he must prophesie *again*, was because those propheticall Visions contained in the 11 *Chap.* from *ver.* 1. to *ver.* 14. though they were the very next he received after he received the open Book from the Angel, were such a new *set* of Prophecies as that the fullfilling of them did not at all belong to the times of the sixth Trumpet, or as if they contained no part of the wo of that Trumpet. But
now

now I shall show why, as I conceive, St. *John* might be said to prophesie again in those very Prophecies, though the fulfilling of them were part of the Event of the sixth Trumpet, and part of the wo of it. And the reason respects partly the nature of the wo to be further brought upon the Empire as corrupt and impenitent, as different from what had been Prophecied of, and brought upon it before, both under the sixth Trumpet, as also under the five precedent Trumpets: and partly in respect of the Agents by whom this latter part of the wo of this sixth Trumpet was to be brought on the corrupt Empire, as different from those by whom the former part of that wo was brought upon it, and from those also who were Executioners of the Plagues of the former five Trumpets.

The Visions of the five precedent Trumpets, represented so many *hostile* Calamities, which were to befall the Empire successively for their Idolatry,

latry, and Cruelty to the Church of God, with other their abominations. And although the wo of the sixth Trumpet began *thus* likewise by the Turkish Invasion and Conquest; Yet the other part of that wo which was to follow, was quite of another nature. For although the wo of the sixth Trumpet in its beginning as well as the Plagues of all the former Trumpets, was brought upon the Empire by those who were Enemies to the Church of God as well as to the Empire it self, yet the other part of that wo contained in Visions in the 11 *Chap.* was to be brought upon the Empire, the Popedom especially (continuing still impenitent) by those of the Church of God. And this not in an hostile manner as the former part of the wo was, but by the Witnesses Prophecying, and by the Reformation, and by pouring out several of the Vials of God's wrath, of a more spiritual nature than the Calamities of War, as is described and represented by the Visions in the 11th *Chap.*

The

The Visions then in the *11th Chap.* though under the sixth Trumpet, differing so much as they do, both from the Visions of the former Trumpets, and from the first Vision of the sixth Trumpet it self, representing as it were a new Scene of Affairs, might well be a reason, not only of the Angels saying unto S. *John*, Thou must Prophesy *again*, but also of such a solemn preparation to it as is contained in the *10th Chap.* And yet since in the *12th Chap.* there begins a new *sett* of Prophecies commencing from the first state of the Christian Church, its possible the Angel in saying, Thou must Prophesy *again*, might have respect to that also. But this was not until St. *John* had done with his Visions of all the seven Trumpets. And indeed it is in it self a very unlikely thing, that before he had done with those Visions of the Trumpets, the thing he had in hand, he should break off from them to begin a new *sett* of Prophecies, and finish them, and after all to return again to the Visions

Visions of the last Trumpet, to make an end of his prophetical Visions under all the Trumpets.

Having thus prepared the way, I shall come now briefly to consider the Visions and Prophecies themselves as they are orderly represented in this *11 Chap.* and I shall begin with the Vision of measuring the Temple, with which that Chapter begins.

Ver. 1. And there was given me a reed like unto a Rod; and the Angel stood, saying, *Rise, and measure the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worship therein.* This, we must note, is not a History of things then done, but a Visional Prophecy of what was to be done in time then to come.

The Temple, Altar, and Worshipers in old Testament time, did summarily comprize God's publick worship: for the publick worship was performed by the Worshipers in the Temple and at the Altar. And by these may be here meant the Christian Church worship, it being frequent

quent in this Book to shadow out the Antitype by an Old Testament Type.

Measuring when apply'd to Temple and Altar, as here it is, is wont to be in order to the building or rebuilding of them; it being a metaphor borrowed from the custom of Architects who use to measure the dimensions of ground, and of the materials of an Edifice to be erected. And by it may be signified and meant in this place the rebuilding or re-establishing a Christian Temple, or a pure and undefiled Church-worship and Worshippers, according to the first Institution of these.

But for our better understanding the matter of this Vision, we must consider from what time the thing signified by this Vision did commence; and that was from the time in which the gross corruptions in worship (such as was the Invocation of Saints, and the giving that honour to Creatures which is due only to God) which had crept into the Church

Church by degrees, had got such an Head, as to be owned and maintained by the Sovereign Powers in the Empire. For this measuring of the Temple, and the beginning of the Beasts 42 Months reign, synchronize, as I shall show on the next Verse: and so does the measuring of the Temple, and the leaving the outward Court of it unmeasured. And the leaving the outward Court which was much larger than the Temple, unmeasured at the same time the Temple was measured, argues plainly, that the greatest part of the Church, as it had been reputed, was at that time grown very corrupt, as the reason given in the next Verse, why the outward Court should not be measured, does likewise show. And by this defection the sound Christians were reduced to much the same necessity of abstaining from Communion in the publick worship of the Empire, though called Christian, as they had been in of forbearing Communion in the Pagan worship,

ship, before Christianity became publickly owned for the Religion of the Empire. And therefore as they were obliged to hold and practise the Communion of Saints in Church worship; so they were, by way of necessity, obliged to hold and practise that Communion more privately and a part from the more publick Assemblies.

Now this being the state and condition of the Church, at the time to which this Vision of measuring the Temple, Altar and Worshipers, did primarily refer, it fairly intimates, that Almighty God, in his Providence, would at this time begin to set on foot a reformed worship among a reformed people, or such as had not been corrupted, as differenced from the people and worship which continued still corrupt, and which were likely still to continue so. And this was as it were a rebuilding of the Christian Temple, the Christian Church-worship, and Worshipers: being much of the same nature, and carried on much after the same manner,

ner, and under the same difficult circumstances as it was at the first, while Paganism was professed as the publick Religion of the Empire. And this new reformed state of the Church and of its worship, having the Sovereign Powers of the Empire against it, and far the greatest part of the people likewise: it did subsist and was carried on in a more private way and manner than the corrupt worship by a corrupt people was, and that all along until the time of Reformation; and the difference between the *Inner Temple* and the *Outward Court*, may be a fair indication of it.

And to this pure and reformed Estate of the Church, that Vision seems to refer, which is set down in the five first Verses of the 14th Chap. of the Revelations, where St. John looked, and lo a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with him 144000. having his Fathers name written in their Foreheads --- These are they which were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins. These are they which follow the

18 *A Discourse of the Nature*

Lamb whithersoever he goeth: These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.

1. This Vision is next adjoined to the Vision of the Rise of the first and second Beast, the ten Horned, and the two horned, related in the former Chapter. And that the rise of the Beast, and the leaving the outward Court of the Temple unmeasured at the same time the Temple itself was measured, do synchronize, I have been shewing already, and shall further show. 2. The place where the Lamb and his Company are here seen apart from the Beast and his Followers, is Mount *Sion*, the very place where the measured Temple stood, in which the true Worshipers worshipped. 3. The difference between the two Parties is made visible and notorious, by the different marks of them to whom they do belong; The Lambs Followers having his Fathers Name written on their Forehead, and the Slaves of the Beast, his mark in their Forehead or right

and Order of Occurrences. 19

right hand. 4. These were not defiled with Women, to be guilty of spiritual Fornication in worship, as those enticed by the Mother of Harlots were; but were Virgins, chaste in their worship, not giving out themselves therein to more than one object of worship. 5. These were redeemed from among men; that is, they were rescued from among the multitude and rabble that followed the Beast, and were the First-fruit to God and to the Lamb, to wit, the first pure Worshipers that followed the Lamb after the Apostasie came to be a *stated* business. These things are great Signs, that the Vision of them belongs to the same times in which the restoring the Christian worship to its purity, first began after the Apostasie, and which was signified by measuring the Temple and Worshipers.

And as I do not doubt but that this state of the Church, from the time aforesaid down to the Reformation, was the fulfilling of this propheticall

Vision to a degree, and in the first instance of it; so I as little doubt but that the more compleat, and in some respect the more eminent accomplishment of it was brought to pass by the Reformation begun by *Luther*, when the *Publickness* of the true Christian worship was restored in several Kingdoms, States and Principalities in the Empire, and became owned, maintained and defended by the Sovereign Powers in them. For as this Vision was seen by *St. John* under the sixth Trumpet, or among the Visions of that Trumpet, and not before; so the compleat fullfilling of it must needs reach down to the times of that Trumpet, and be effected by the Reformation which was brought to pass in those times. The reason of this I have already shown, and shall now proceed to some other reasons which may facilitate our belief, that the former Reformation begun about the beginning of the Beasts 42 Months Reign, and the latter begun by *Luther*, were the fullfilling of this Vision and

and Prophecy of measuring the Temple, Altar and Worshipers.

1. Such Visional and Prophetical measuring as this here is, has been wont in other of the Prophets to prognosticate and foreshow by way of sign the Restauration of God's publick worship, after it has for a time been suppress'd. Thus the measuring of *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, after some of the Jews return out of their 70. years Captivity, was a sign to assure them, that their City and Temple should be rebuilt, and their publick worship restored. *Zech. 2. 1, 2.* *I lift up mine eyes again and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand; Then said I, whither goest thou? And he said unto me, to measure Jerusalem, to see what is the length thereof, and what is the breadth thereof. And Chap. 1. 16. Therefore thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of Hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. The measuring of the Temple*

Temple of *Jerusalem* described in *Ezek.* 40. 3. and the Chapters following : prefigure and foretel a far more famous restauration of God's publick worship among the Jews at last, than what was vouchsafed them after their return from *Babylon*, and after a far longer Captivity. The erecting the holy City, the new *Jerusalem* Church state, as excelling all that had been before it, and this after the destruction of the City of *Babylon*, or corrupt Church state, is signified and fore-shew'd by its being measured with a golden reed, *Rev.* 21. 15.

The restitution then of God's publick worship being usually the thing intended to be foreshewn in other Prophets, by a Vision of measuring the wonted places of God's publick worship, after they have long lain desolate, is a very good reason why we should understand the same thing to be prefigured by this Visional measuring of *St. John*. This Harmony in prophetick Schemes of this nature, is such a reason and ground of fixing upon

upon this fence of this Vision of *St. John*, as no other interpretation of it can, I presume, pretend to.

2. The Reformation begun by *Luther*, by which God's publick worship was restored in many Kingdoms, States and Principalities, is most likely to be the final Event of this Visional measuring the Temple and Altar, because it fell out at such a time as did exactly correspond with, and answer to that order of time in which *St. John* had this Vision. And I have shew'd before, that the Events of Visions seen by *St. John* under the sixth Trumpet, were in whole or in part, to fall out in the times of that Trumpet at least, if not in the same order they were seen, as this we are upon seems to have done. For *St. John* had this Vision not only under the sixth Trumpet, but also after that Vision of the *Euphratean* Horsemen's over-running the Eastern Empire. Now that the Reformation was the next great Event of Providence which fell out in the Western Empire, after the

24 *A Discourse of the Nature*

the ruine of the Eastern by the Turks, appears plainly in History. For the Turks had prevailed so far in that Conquest, as that in the year 1453. they had made themselves Masters of *Constantinople*, the Capital City of the Eastern Empire. And after this the time ran on for more than 50. years in completing their Conquest, by subduing *Syria*, *Palestine*, and part of *Egypt*, and some other places which had escaped them before.

And that which followed a little after these things, was the Reformation begun by *Luther* in the year 1517. So that this exquisite agreement in time and order, between the Vision and the Event of measuring the Temple, is little less than a demonstration, that the Vision was as it were the Type, and the Reformation the Antitype of it. It must be remembred that it is much more easie for us who come after the time to which the place and order of this Vision points, to understand with some certainty, what occurrence is, or has been

and Order of Occurrences. 25

been the fullfilling of it, than it was for those who lived before it to determine what occurrence should afterwards be the proper event of it. For when we have several events of Providence before us which have fallen out in the time of this sixth Trumpet, we may the better judge which of them best answers to the nature of the Vision that was to be fullfilled in that time. The fullfilling of Prophetical Visions do in a great measure expound them. To these reasons I might add

3. That it may farther appear, that the Reformation was prefigured by measuring the Temple, by the two Witnesses (by whose prophesying it was brought about) being represented by three pair of famous Reformers under the Old Testament, to wit, *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Elias* and *Elisba*, *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* the High Priest. For the two Witnesses here spoken of, are made the Antitype in their reforming work, to *Moses* and *Aaron* in bringing the people out of the

the bondage of myſtical *Egypt*, as they had *Iſrael* out of the bondage of literal *Egypt*, and to them they are compared, *ver. 6.* In this work alſo they reſembled *Elias* with *Elifha* in recovering the people from Antichriſtian Idolatry, as they had *Iſrael* from *Baaliſh* Idolatry, and to them they are compared, *ver. 6.* But the pair of Old Teſtament Reformers, to which the two Witneſſes are firſt compared, *ver. 4.* are, we ſee, *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, under the Symbol of two Olive Trees, and two Candleſticks. Which ſeems to be a fair intimation, that what was foreſhow'd by meaſuring the Temple and Altar juſt before mentioned, ſhould be brought to paſs by the two Witneſſes reſembling therein *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, in their rebuilding the Temple, and reſtoring God's publick worſhip. And that it was an intimation of ſuch a thing is the more likely; becauſe this pair of Old Teſtament Reformers; though laſt in order of Hiſtory of the three made uſe of in this Chapter, are yet

yet firſt in the compariſon here made between them and the Witneſſes. And why ſo? But becauſe this pair of Reformers in their rebuilding the Temple, and reſtoring God's publick worſhip in their time, did beſt ſerve to exhibit in a figure what the two Witneſſes were to do in reſtoring God's publick worſhip by the Reformation. This reaſon ſhows the ſence given of meaſuring the Temple and Altar, to be agreeable to the general ſcope and deſign of the following Viſions as well as this, which all run upon Reformation work to be brought about by the Witneſſes. This conſideration, together with the agreeableneſs of this ſence, with other prophetick Schemes concerning the reſtitution of God's publick worſhip, prefigured by a like meaſuring the Temple, do render the ſence given to be the moſt natural, and the moſt eaſie.

Ver. 2. But the Court which is without the Temple, leave out and meaſure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles; and the holy City ſhall they tread under foot 42 months. This

This seems to be a Visional Prophecy, that the Reformation and re-
 staurati^{on} of God's publick worship,
 signified by measuring the Temple,
 should be brought to pass but in part
 of the Western Empire, and that in
 the rest of it, the former corruptions
 which had been brought into the
 Church, should still prevail until the
 42 Months of Years shall be run out.
 Which 42 Months are to be reckoned
 to commence from the time in which
 those corruptions having crept into
 the Church more privately and by de-
 grees had got such an head, and had
 so far prevailed, as to be owned and
 maintained by the Sovereign Powers
 of the Empire. This appears in that
 the ten horned Beast had power given
 him, as to make War with the Saints,
 and to overcome them, so to conti-
 nue 42 Months, *Chap.* 13. 5, 7. So
 that the beginning of this 42 Months
 is to be dated from the beginning of
 this Beasts Reign, and to last no longer
 than till the Reformation first took
 place: for this outer Court was not
 to

to be measured in order to its being
 rebuilt as the Temple was.

I cannot but take notice here, that
 this measuring the Temple and Altar
 cannot refer to the pure state of the
 Church before it fell into gross cor-
 ruption, as some would have it, who
 suppose this measuring to import the
 Church at this time to be commensu-
 rate to the divine rule. But if by the
 outward Court of the Temple, and
 the Gentiles which were to tread the
 holy City under foot, be meant the
 corrupt and degenerate part of the
 Church as is generally held it is;
 Then the measuring of the Temple
 here cannot refer to such a time or
 state of the Church in general, where-
 in it continued as yet pure and uncor-
 rupt, and commensurate to the holy
 rule. And the reason is, because at
 the same time to which the measu-
 ring the Temple and Altar do refer,
 the outward Court of it was incom-
 mensurate; that is, the greatest part
 of the Church was so corrupt, as
 made them incapable of being taken
 C into

30 *A Discourse of the Nature*

into the number of the Worshippers in the Inner Temple which was measured. And thus it was with that part of the corrupt Church which continued still unreformed in the time of that Reformation begun by *Luther*, when this Visional Prophecy was completely fulfill'd, and eminently also, in that the pure and uncorrupt worship was restored to an open and publick enjoyment of it.

Ver. 3. *And I will give power to my two Witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth.*

The time of these Witnesses prophesying we see is equal to the time of the Gentiles prophaning the holy City: their prophesying began with that, and runs parallel with it to the end of its race. They bare their Testimony for God and for his truth and pure worship, and against the contrary corruptions which had got into the Church. And this prophesying of theirs all along from the beginning of the Beasts reign, produced at last the

and Order of Occurrences. 31

the happy Reformation and Restitution of Gods publick worship in many Kingdoms, States, and Principalities, within the Western Empire, and is still carried on by their prophesying.

Which Reformation was a great Victory obtained over the Beast, wherein he lost a great part of his Dominions and of his power, and was celebrated with a Triumphant Song called, *the Song of Moses and of the Lamb*, Chap. 15. 2. And this Victory and the loss sustained by it, was one considerable part of the wo of the sixth Trumpet upon the *Beastian* Party in the Western Empire, as the Turkish Conquest was another on the Eastern. For it was and has been a sore cut to them, being no less than a partial downfall of the Kingdom of the Beast. And unto this part of the second wo has been and will be added under this Trumpet, a great part of the plagues of the Vials, called the seven last plagues.

Ver. 4. *These are the two Olive Trees,*

Trees, and the two Candlesticks standing before the God of the Earth. Meaning that these two Witnesses in their work were like unto *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* in theirs, who strengthened the hands of the Jews in their rebuilding their City and Temple in a troublous time, and under very great opposition; upon account whereof they were represented to the Prophet *Zachary* in a Vision, as two Olive Trees, and in the midst a Candlestick with two Branches receiving Oyl from the Olive Trees; by these in feeding the Lamps, the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was made lightsome in the darkest night, *Zech.* 4.

Ver. 5. *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their Enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

This seems to set forth in general, the effect which the prophesying of the two Prophets, after the Reformation, should have upon their Adversaries; they should be devoured by

by the fire which proceeded out of their mouths. Not that it should make an end of them presently; such prophetick Schemes are not so to be understood. But the meaning rather is, that the word of their Prophecy, which is the fire which proceedeth out of their mouth, should seize on their Adversaries and arrest them in the name of the Lord, from which they should never get themselves discharged until it should bring them into utter ruin, they continuing impenitent. Thus the word of the Prophets of old was said to take hold of the Sinners against whom it was denounced, *Zech.* 1. 6. But my words which I commanded my Servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers? Yes most certainly they did, so that they were never discharged after, until the evil denounced against them was actually brought upon them, as it there follows. Thus again; *I have hewed them by the Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth,* saith God, *Hos.* 6. 5. Fire as

here proceeding out of the Mouth of the Witnesses, and devouring their Adversaries, is to be understood as that in *Jer. 5. 14. Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.*

And whereas it is added here, with a redoubling of words, if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed, it affords us a good reason why we should the rather believe what I hinted formerly, which was that the latter part of the wo of the sixth Trumpet is of a much different nature from the former part of it. The former part of it consisted in a plague of War, as I shew'd: but this latter part of it of a torment and vexation of a more spiritual nature, such as is the proper effect of the Witnesses prophesying, or a being devoured by fire proceeding out of their mouth. And in saying if any man will hurt them he must in this manner be kill'd, he seems thereby to describe the nature of the plagues of those Vials, or of most of them which were to be poured

poured out under the sixth Trumpet, upon the Enemies of the Witnesses.

Now that the prophesying of the Witnesses against their Adversaries, has been and is matter of present wo and torment to their minds, and such as has greatly enraged them from time to time, may easily be conceived. For the Witnesses are wont to denounce from the word of the Lord the approaching ruine and utter destruction of mystical *Babylon*, with all its pomp and glory: And not only so, but also, that whoever they be that worship the Beast and his Image, and receive his mark in their forehead or in their hand, the same shall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his indignation, and shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, in the presence of the holy Angels, and of the Lamb, and the like. Now this and such like Fire which proceedeth out of the Witnesses mouth, will be apt more or less to kindle in the minds of their

Adversaries, and to flash like lightning into their Consciences, as not knowing whatever Face they set upon it, but that these and such like threatnings belong to them. They may, as there is the greatest reason they should, be jealous whether there be not some smell of the fire of Hell in their Consciences, when that Fire is darted into them which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Witnesses, and whether it may not prove a savour of death unto death to them. And if such prophesying of the Witnesses produce any such fears and jealousies in their Adversaries, it must needs make their lives very uneasy to them: *For fear bath torment*, saith St. John, *and a wounded spirit who can bear?* saith Solomon. And that the prophesying of the Witnesses is wont to torment their Enemies, is very evident from the 10. ver. of this Chap. where it's said, these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the Earth.

Ver. 6. *These have power to shut
heaven*

heaven that it rain not, in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

In this Verse we have some instances of the way and manner of the Witnesses tormenting their Enemies: As first in shutting Heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. Herein alluding to what *Elias* did in the days of *Ahab*, in causing it not to rain in three years and six Months. But the Witnesses thus shutting Heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy which lasteth three years and a half also of propheticall years, is not to be understood literally as that was, but mystically. And by the rain here said to be restrained by the Witnesses, is probably meant the great and rich consolations of the Gospel, which revive and refresh penitent Souls, as rain from Heaven doth the parched and thirsty ground when it falls upon it. And the Witnesses restrain this rain from falling

falling upon the followers of the Beast, as *Elias* did the other from falling upon the followers of *Baal*, by rectifying and pronouncing from the word of the Lord, that the Heavenly and Evangelical Consolations do not at all belong to them while they continue in their Idolatrous, and other enormous practices. But if they would once cease from destroying the Lords Prophets, and put away *Baal's* Priests, and return to worship the true Eternal God only, they might expect abundance of this rain from Heaven, as the *Israelites* had of the other as soon as they became reformed.

And have power over Waters to turn them to Blood.

This power of the Witnesses in bringing these plagues upon the great City spiritually called *Egypt*, v. 8. is in allusion to one of the *Egyptian* Plagues by the hand of *Moses*. But it is not literally to be understood, as the art of *Moses* is, but spiritually, or mystically, as the great City is when

when spiritually called *Egypt*. And it contains two of the seven last Plagues, called the Plagues of the Vials, to wit, the second and third of them, as we may see by comparing these words with those in *Chap. 16. 3 & 4. Ver. And the second Angel poured forth his Vial upon the Sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living Soul died in the Sea. And the third Angel poured out his Vial upon the Rivers and Fountains of Waters, and they became blood.*

But we are not to understand waters here in a proper sense, as those in *Egypt* were, but in a spiritual and mystical sense, as *Egypt* it self is here, as was but now shew'd. And by waters in a mystical sense, we can understand nothing more properly than doctrines concerning spiritual things, things which concern the life of the Soul, if sound and wholsom, or the death and destruction of it, if corrupt. Even as the waters in *Egypt* concerned the life and health of the body before they became blood, but

but afterwards tended to the destruction of both, if any were so mad as to drink of them. I need not give instances to show how frequently in Scripture we are to understand Doctrines and Ordinances of worship, covered with the metaphors of water, it being a thing so well known. Here we see are two sorts of water turned to blood, the waters of the Sea, and the waters of the Rivers and Fountains: The former as the effect of the effusion of the second Vial, and the latter as the effect of the effusion of the third. By the waters of the Sea may be understood the corrupt Doctrines of the Council of *Trent*, imposed upon men to be received as waters of life drawn out of the Wells of Salvation, as things necessary to be believed and practised, in order to the obtaining Salvation. The Sea in a proper sense, is a Collection of many waters flowing into it, into one Body: All the Rivers run into the Sea. saith *Solomon*. And thus the Council of *Trent* might be a Sea in a mystical

mystical sense, because of the flowing of Bishops and Doctors into it, from all popish quarters to bring into one body a multitude of corrupt Doctrines and Positions which were ratified and confirmed by their authority, as if they had been indeed waters of life, and such as whosoever should drink should live for ever.

And the Witnesses, Bishops, Doctors and other of the Reformation, turned these waters into blood, like the corrupt blood of a dead man, not by making them such, but by discovering and proving them to be such by preaching and writing, and that men could no more live eternally by drinking those waters, than Fish can live in the Sea, in case it were turned into blood, like the blood of a dead Man. And by doing thus they justified the work of Reformation, and their own separation from the Church of *Rome*, and strengthened the Reformed interest more and more, to the great vexation and torment of their Adversaries.

But

But then hereupon, the choicest of the men of learning and parts among the unreformed Party, undertook the vindication and defence of the corrupt Doctrines of the Council of *Trent* against our reformed Divines. And these were but as Rivers and Fountains, deriving their streams from their Sea, and returning them back again into it. But then our Reformed Authors did most effectually confute them, and thereby turned those waters into blood also in the sense aforesaid.

These transactions falling out in the times of the sixth Trumpet, under which Trumpet the Vision of these things was seen, and that in course after the Vision of the Reformation also; it may incline us the rather to think this event of Providence to be the proper event and fulfilling of this Vision.

The interpretation of the third Vial concerning the turning the Rivers and Fountains into blood, others carry another way, who would have the

the shedding the blood of some few Jesuits and Priests, by virtue of some sanguinary Laws made against their labouring to seduce Subjects to own a foreign superiour power over their lawful Sovereigns, to be meant by turning the Rivers and Fountains into blood. To which they add the overthrow and destruction which the Spanish Armado received in attempting to reduce this Nation to the Romish Yoke. Which interpretation seems to receive countenance from the saying of the Angel upon the Rivers and Fountains becoming blood: *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be; because thou hast judged thus: For they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* Chap. 16. 5, 6. But this sense does not seem to agree with the mystical nature which has been observed in these Visions all along. And besides, the foresaid saying of the Angel is capable of a mystical sense as well as all the rest which were before it.

44 *A Discourse of the Nature*

it. For it is just with God, after all the means used, to bring those to repentance who still persist in their malicious shedding the blood of Saints, when they have opportunity, to give them up to such an injudicious mind, as to drink down those corrupt Doctrines, as believing them to be Waters of Life, when indeed they are destructive of the health of their Souls. It's foretold of the followers of the man of sin, that because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, that for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, *2 Thess. 2. 10.* And whether of these fences is most likely to be the right, or whether both may not be intended, I leave to be considered.

And to smite the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will.

These words contain another part of the power of the two Witnesses; they

and Order of Occurrences. 45

they have power not only to turn waters into blood, but also to smite the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will. Which argues still, that the latter part of the wo of the sixth Trumpet, consisteth much in such plagues as the Adversaries of the Witnesses suffer by their prophesying, rather than from any hostile attempts, either from them, or from any others. For with this sort of plagues it may most properly be said, they had power to smite them as oft as they have a mind to it.

This general assertion touching their power of smiting the Earth with all plagues, following immediately upon that particular assertion of their having power to turn Waters into Blood, the words seem to intimate, that as they have power to inflict those two plagues of the second and third Vial, by turning the Waters into Blood, so they have power also to smite the Earth with the rest of the plagues of the Vials in course, though they be not here particularly named.

D

For

46 *A Discourse of the Nature*

For if they have power to smite the Earth with *all* plagues, then the plagues of the Vials must needs be included in that *all*, if not only meant by it. Besides, if we compare *Chap. 16. 1.* with the Text in hand, it may further incline us to think the plagues of the Vials were the plagues where-with the Witnesses had power to smite the Earth. For it's said there, *I heard a great Voice out of the Temple, saying to the seven Angels, Go your ways and pour out the Vials of the wrath of God upon the Earth.* For to smite the Earth with plagues, and to pour out the Vials of wrath upon the Earth, seem to signify the same thing. This has respect to the plagues of the Vials in general.

But more particularly, by the smiting the Earth by the Witnesses here, the effusion of the first Vial may be hinted at, which was poured out upon the Earth, *Rev. 16. 2.* Upon which there fell a grievous and noisome sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast (as they especially

and Order of Occurrences. 47

cially have who are in Orders under the Beast; and have the indelible Character) and upon them that worshipped his Image. By which may be meant not only their envy and exulted fury against the Witnesses; but also the *unleanness* and other lewdness of those men, together with their gross Hypocrisy, which upon discovery thereof then made by the Witnesses, appeared as so many foul botches upon them, to their great shame and horrible vexation, and to the weakening of their interest; so that they could no more stand before the Witnesses, than the Magicians of *Egypt* could stand before *Moses* when the boyl was upon them.

If it be matter of doubt to any whether those evils I have mentioned can be the proper effect of the Vials, since they are of so spiritual a nature, and so little affect and strike the senses. Let such consider, That there is a great difference between the plagues of the Trumpets, in their first appearance, and those of the Vials

that follow, as we find under this sixth Trumpet. The plagues of all the Trumpets which have yet been blown, have been ushered in, and made their entrance with an awakening noise and observation, making themselves to be taken notice of by all. For they have rushed in upon the Empire by six successive Judgments of War, as the common interpretation of the events of those Trumpets show. And indeed the very founding of a Trumpet, is very significant of such a thing. The blowing of a Trumpet is frequently used in Scripture, as an Alarm of War approaching, and of the Calamities which usually attend it.

But the plagues of the Vials which have been already poured out, have fallen in a more silent way, and less discernable by most, being of a more spiritual nature. For as I formerly observed, when the dreadful judgment of the conquering War of the Turks, by which the wo of the sixth Trumpet made its entrance into the Empire,

Empire, did not work repentance in the degenerate Christians of their Idolatries and other enormous practices: then there followed other means of Conviction and cure of a more spiritual nature, such was the Reformation, the Witnesses prophesying and pouring out some of the Vials and the like. Which proving ineffectual, as to their cure, through their own obstinacy, became so many tormenting plagues to them, but not so visible to all as the Turkish conquest was. But when I say this has been the nature of the Vials already past, I dare not say but those to come may be of somewhat a different nature in whole or in part, especially the last of them, which is like to produce both great and visible Judgments.

The things hitherto insisted on, considered, do I conceive afford us a sufficient ground to conclude that part of the Vials (and probably the greatest part of them) were to be poured out between the time of the Reformation and the ending of the

sixth Trumpet. For the order of time in which the Visions of these Occurrences were seen, and the order and succession of the Occurrences themselves direct us to this conclusion, according to the rule formerly laid down for the understanding the proper time and order of events, and fulfilling propheticall Visions, by the time when and under what Trumpet they were seen. And the Vision of the Witnesses turning the Waters into Blood, and of their smiting the Earth with all plagues as often as they will, is next or near next the Vision of measuring the Temple, and the other parts of that Vision, and of the Reformation signified thereby; and yet is before the ending of the sixth Trumpet, which comes not to a period till after the slaughter and resurrection of the Witnesses which follow after that of the Witnesses turning the Waters into Blood.

Besides, we may see that the beginning of the effusion of the Vial, does presently follow upon the Vi-

Story

Story obtained over the Beast, by comparing *Chap. 15.* with *Chap. 16.* and yet that Victory (as is granted) was obtained by the Reformation. Since then this Reformation fell out under the sixth Trumpet, and the turning Waters into Blood, followed presently upon the Reformation, and yet before the ending of the sixth Trumpet, it is a plain and pregnant intimation that those Vials were poured out in the times of the sixth Trumpet by the effusion of which the Waters were turned into Blood.

But it may be it will be said, that if this Vision of the Witnesses turning Waters into Blood was seen under the sixth Trumpet, and that the second and third Vial were thereby meant, and that this Vision and Prophecy was accordingly to be fulfill'd in the time of the sixth Trumpet, Then why are they not here mentioned by their name *Vials*, as they are in *Chap. 16.* which is their proper place.

D 4

To

To this I answer, It was not necessary, nor indeed convenient, to have them described by their name in this place, because if they had, we should have had them but in piecemeal; for they were not all to take place under the sixth Trumpet, and therefore not to be all mentioned in this Vision, which was a Vision, or part of a Vision of that Trumpet. It was most meet to reserve the name and number of the Vials unto the time and place where they are all set down in their proper order, to the end it might be the better known which was to take place first, and which next, and so on to the last. The 16. *Chap.* does not at all acquaint us under what Trumpet, or about what time this or that Vial was to be poured out; that is, to be learned from the Visions of the Trumpets themselves. How should we have known for instance, that the second and third Vials, besides others, were to be poured out in time of the sixth Trumpet,

pet, if we had not met with their *Character* in a Vision of the sixth Trumpet, by which they are described in the 16. *Chap.*

If it were any good argument to prove that none of the Vials were to be poured out in the time of the sixth Trumpet, in as much as they are not mentioned by their name and title in any of the Visions under that Trumpet, it would as well be an argument to prove, that none of them will be poured out in the time of the seventh Trumpet neither, and consequently, that there shall be no effusion of the Vials at all. For there is not any one of the Vials mentioned by name in the Visions of the seventh Trumpet. But if the mentioning of the last Vial under its proper Character, in one of the Visions of the seventh Trumpet, be an argument to prove, that the last Vial will be poured out in the time of the last Trumpet, as most certainly it is (*Chap.* 11. 19. with *Chap.* 16. 18.) Then the mentioning the second and third Vial under their proper

proper Character, in one of the Visions of the sixth Trumpet, must needs be a good argument to prove, that those Vials were to be poured out in the times of that Trumpet. I do not mention the second and third Vial here, as if there were no more to be poured out in the time of the sixth Trumpet; but I mention these only, because the Character of these is express and unexceptionable, though there is sufficient intimation of more of the Vials in the same Vision, though not so express.

I add yet farther, that to have described the seven Vials, by their name, number and order, as in *Chap. 16.* before the Visions of the seven Trumpets had been brought to an issue, and the rehearsal of them finished, would have been a confounding one seven with another, the seven Trumpets with the seven Vials, and a breaking the line of discourse concerning the Trumpets. For the avoiding of which perhaps it was, that when in the time of the sixth Trumpet

Trumpet seven thunders uttered their Voices, the Angel would not suffer *St. John* to write them, and to set down in particular what each Voice declared: he would not have the things of the seven thundering Voices mingled with the things of the seven Trumpets, no otherwise than by some hints in general.

There is another objection which is levied against any of the Vials at all, being poured out in the times of the sixth Trumpet; and the reason and ground on which it is founded, is this. The seven Vials are called the seven *last* Plagues, which yet they could not be unless the *first* plagues, which are the plagues of the Trumpets, were to take place before them.

But I answer, That the seven Vials are not said to be the seven *last* plagues for that reason, because they succeed the plagues of the Trumpets, but for another reason, which the Text it self assigns, in which they are stiled the last plagues, and that is, because

because in them is filled up the wrath of God, Rev. 15. 1. *And I saw another sign in Heaven great and marvellous, seven Angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.* They are called the last plagues therefore, because no more shall succeed them, but they shall finish the work designed to be done by plagues; in them is filled up the wrath of God, or in them is finished the wrath of God; so Doctor Hammond reads it. And accordingly upon the pouring out of the last of the seven Vials; its said, *There came a great Voice out of the Temple of Heaven from the Throne, saying, it is done.* Rev. 16. 17. The Vials then are not called the seven last plagues, because other plagues went before them, but because no other shall follow after them for the finishing the work, for which the plagues both of the Trumpets and the Vials were designed. And indeed if any other plagues had been to succeed them, they could not have been the last: Which

Which still shows, that the proper reason why they are called the last plagues, is because no more are to follow: in them will be filled up the wrath of God to the full.

But having said this in way of answer, I shall now show, that the plea for placing all the Vials under the seventh Trumpet, in opposition to Mr. Mede, who placeth most of them under the sixth; is built on a great oversight, or mistake. For though the Author of the plea makes two Setts of plagues succeeding one another, that of the Vials to follow that of the Trumpets, yet he does not make that of the Trumpets to consist of seven plagues answerable to the seven Trumpets (which he ought to have done, if he would make one entire sett of them) but only of six of them. For in one place he saith, *the Trumpet plagues are just six as well as the Vial plagues seven.* And again he saith, *the whole set or number of the last plagues of the Vials, are so called, in respect of the whole sett, or number of the plagues*

plagues of the six Trumpets. And then in another place he argueth to this effect. For it being said of every one of the seven last plagues, that it is the last, it must be so in respect of all the foregoing plagues in the former conceived *Series*, else it will be falsely called the last, nor would there be seven last plagues in number. For no more of the seven can be said in respect of the precedent plagues to be the last, than such as *follow all the plagues precedent*, after they have expired, that is to say, unless the first of the last plagues expire after the last of the former *Series*, the enunciation is false. Again, he says, It is plain to every one at first sight, that is not blinded with prejudice, That every one of the seven last plagues must be later than any one of those plagues, in respect of which they are termed the last.

This arguing seems plausible upon supposition, that the plagues of the Trumpets had been but six, and the plagues of the Vials, called the seven last

last plagues for that reason, because they succeed the plagues of the six Trumpets. But supposing what will presently be proved, that all the seven plagues of the seven Trumpets make but one intire sett of plagues, as the Vials do another, the foresaid reasoning, if grounded thereon, would be most absurd and false. For then to say, that every one of the seven last plagues must be later than any one of those plagues, in respect of which, they are termed the last, would be to say, that every one of the plagues of the seven Vials must be later, and follow after the plague of the seventh Trumpet it self, which to affirm, what can be more absurd, or more untrue?

And should we instead of the Authors calling the Trumpet-plagues the foregoing plagues, but call them the *seven* foregoing plagues of the Trumpets, the consequence of the reasoning here used, would sufficiently evince it impossible, that the seven last plagues are so called, because

cause they follow the seven plagues of the Trumpets. As for Example; It being said of every one of the seven last plagues, that it is the last, it must be so in respect of all the seven foregoing plagues of the Trumpets, else it will be falsely called the *last*. For no more of the seven can be said in respect of the seven preceding plagues of the Trumpets to be the last, than such as follow all the seven precedent plagues of the Trumpets after they have expired; that is to say, unless the first of the Vial plagues expire after the last of the seven Trumpet-plagues, the enunciation is false, *viz.* in saying, it is one of the last plagues. This way of reasoning we see, if it proves any thing, proves, that none of the plagues of the Vials are to take place till after the last of the seven Trumpet-plagues are expired. Which is a thing I know the Author himself does not believe, who holds that the times of the seventh Trumpet will last not only to the final overthrow of all Antichristian Powers, and to the bringing

bringing in the blessed *Millennium*, but also to the end of the World. The absurdity then of the opinion, that the seven Vials are called the seven last plagues for that reason, because they follow after all the plagues of the seven Trumpets, is argument sufficient, if there were no other, to show that they are not said to be the last plagues upon that account. And if not upon that account, I know not for what other reason they can be called the seven last plagues, but only that which the Angel has given, and I have already named, to wit, because in them is filled up the wrath of God. For the Particle [for] in that place carries the force of a reason ---- the seven last plagues, [for] in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Now that the entire sett or number of the Trumpet-plagues were seven, is so plain, that nothing can be plainer, if we suppose the first six to be Plague-Trumpets; for the fifth, sixth and seventh, are in special called wo

E

Trumpets.

Trumpets. And therefore by what Warrant the Author (who ever he is) hath limited them to six, he doth not acquaint us, nor can I imagine. Only he strongly conceives, but does not prove, that the effusion of all the Vials follows after the sixth Trumpet. And the reason he alledges for it is, because the Vials follow after the Victory got over the Beast, they being set down in the 16 *Chap.* but the Victory over the Beast in the 15th. But this is far from proving, that the effusion of all the Vials must needs follow the ending of the sixth Trumpet, because the Victory over the Beast was obtained by the Reformation, between which and the ending of the sixth Trumpet, we have notice of several of the Vials by their proper Characters, as I have showed before: So that the Vials might well enough follow that Victory over the Beast, and yet take place under the sixth Trumpet.

Two things may be said in favour of Mr. Mede's Judgment in holding
fix

six of the Vials have and will be poured out under the sixth Trumpet. First that the wo of the sixth Trumpet, which at first fell on the Eastern Empire by the prevailing power of the Turks, continues still and lies heavy upon it unto this day, after three or four of the Vials have been poured out. In respect of that as well as in other respects, it cannot yet be said the second wo is past. Nor will it be past until the effusion of the sixth Vial, if by pouring out that Vial upon the great River *Euphrates*, and the drying up the Water thereof, be meant the dissolution of the Turkish Monarchy, as it is thought it is, when compared with the latter end of the 11th of *Daniel*. Secondly, When we consider, that the proper Event of the seventh Trumpet will be the finishing the mystery of God declared to the Prophets, we have reason to think we are not yet in the Times of the seventh Trumpet, because we have reason to think nothing of that which will be properly the finishing

of that Mystery of God, is yet brought to pass, such as will be the last and irrecoverable overthrow of the power and rule of the Churches Enemies, and the great enlargement and overspreading power of the Church. But of this more will be said when we come to the Vision of the seventh Trumpet.

Thus far we have seen what the Witnesses were to do against the Beast: But that which next follows, shows what the Beast will do against them.

Ver. 7. *And when they have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the Bottomless-Pit, shall make War against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

Although the Witnesses shall have much weakened the Kingdom of the Beast by the Reformation, their prophesying and pouring out most of the Vials, and shall thereupon be almost ready to throw off their Sackcloth, the days of their mournful Prophecy being near expiring: yet it seems Almighty

mighty God, either to awaken his people to repentance for some general declining, or to make himself the more known in the World by their speedy deliverance when brought very low by their Enemies, or for some other reason will suffer their Enemies to prevail against them, and to triumph over them for a short time.

The time when this War shall be made against the Witnesses, is here said to be when they shall *have finished* their testimony; or according to Mr. Mede's reading, when they shall be *about to finish it*; that is, when the 1260. prophetic days of their mournful Prophecy are expired, or near expiring, Then it is, that the Beast shall make this War; for so long they were to prophesie clothed in Sackcloth.

But there are some who would have the Text run thus; not when they have finished, or be about to finish, *but when they shall be finishing, performing, or declaring their testimony,*

this War shall be made against them. And so they understand their finishing their testimony to import no more than their performing or declaring their testimony against the Beast and his followers all along their 1260. years prophecy. And accordingly they understand by the War here said to be made against them, to be none other than what the Beast has been making against them all along their 1260. days Prophecy, nor their slaughter any other than what they suffered in that length of time. But that this cannot be the sense and meaning of the place, consider

1. That it is disagreeable to the general and common signification of the word *finish*, or to have finished, as it is used in Scripture, and against the common use of it in speech and other writings. It would be tedious to show by particular instances in Scripture, how the word *finishing* almost every where signifies to bring the things to which it is applied, to an *issue*, to an *end*, to a *close*, to a *point*;

point, and to *consummate*, *perfect*, and *complete* them. And to force an unusual signification upon a word, where the scope of the place, and nature of the matter where it is used, does not necessarily require it, has little authority in it to procure assent.

2. This War and this slaughter of the Witnesses here spoken of, according to the Order and succession of Occurrences represented before in this Chapter, are such Events as were to follow *after* the Reformation, at a great distance, yea which were to follow after such other things as were to follow after the Reformation itself; such as was the effusion of several of the Vials: And if so, then not any War against the Witnesses, nor any slaughter of them preceding the Reformation, can be that War, or that slaughter here spoken of.

But it is objected, That if the War here spoken of, by which the Witnesses are said to be slain, were not meant of that War by which the Wit-

nesses had suffered a political death, all along the time of their mournful Prophecy, and many times a violent death in a proper sence; but of a War at the end of it only, Then there is nothing in the Vision here which represents any War at all of the Beast against the Witnesses, nor any political death they suffered by it all along their 1260. years mournful Prophecy, though there is a clear account of both in History.

Answer; And what if there be no such former War represented in this Vision? Is it not enough, that it is represented elsewhere in this Book? as it is *Chap. 13. 7.* Besides other places. *He shall make War with the Saints, and overcome them.* And the History of the Witnesses suffering all along before the Reformation, will well enough answer to this Prophecy, though the War of the Beast against them in this place respects but a War which the Beast will raise against them long after the time in which the Reformation first began. And when the
Beast

Beast shall have suffered so much from the Witnesses as is represented, he shall in the former part of this 11th Chapter; it falls in naturally, that he in revenge should make a new attempt against them, as here 'tis foretold he will.

But it is further objected; What greater over-coming of Witnesses by the Beasts War can we conceive should befall them now at the end of their 1260. years Prophecy, than had befallen them all along before?

Answer, It is not pretended that any greater over-coming of the Witnesses, by the Beast, shall befall them at the end of their mournful Prophecy, than had befallen them before the Reformation. But for our better understanding this matter in hand, it is to be considered, That the former prevailing of the Beast against the Witnesses, and their great sufferings thereby, were in a great measure, and to a good degree, taken off by the Reformation, by which Reformation the Witnesses got a great Victory
over

over the Beast and his Party. By which and by what followed thereupon, by the Witnesses prophesying, and by their pouring out a great part of the Vials, they had disabled the Beast, for some Ages, from overcoming them in any such hostile manner as he had done before the Reformation, and became able to secure themselves in a great measure, and to make their part good against him.

By the Beasts former War, the Witnesses had for a long time been deprest and kept out of all publick employment in Church and State. But the Witnesses were in great part restored to these priviledges in the times of the Reformation, and in the Countreys that have been reformed, and will have kept possession of them for a long time before this last War of the Beast takes place.

But after all this, and about the time in which the Witnesses mournful prophecy should come to an end, Almighty God (as this Prophecy does inform

inform us) will permit unto the Beast an opportunity of renewing his old War against the Witnesses, and with such success as that the Beast shall repossess himself of his former power over them, and shall deprive them again of their publick power and priviledges for some little time.

As it behoved our Lord Christ first to suffer, and then to enter into his glory of high exaltation; so it seems probable, that his Church in this will be made something conformable to him; that is, in being humbled and brought very low for a little season, but a little before her highest exaltation in this World.

The next three Verses 8, 9, 10. contain a propheticall representation of the disgrace the Beast and his party will put upon the Witnesses after they have overcome them, and how they will rejoice and triumph over them. But then in the 11 and 12 Verse, we have the Resurrection of these slain Witnesses prophetically set forth.

And

And after three days and an half, the Spirit of Life from God entred into them, and they stood upon their feet. And they heard a great Voice from Heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to Heaven in a Cloud, and their Enemies beheld them.

This Resurrection is to be understood only of those who escaped the loss of their natural lives in the War, by which the Beast overcame the Witnesses and kill'd them, and consequently of a political Resurrection. The political death they suffered, though they escaped a natural death, was their being cast down and deprived of all publick power and employment, both in Church and State: and therefore by their Resurrection in a political sense, we are to understand their being restored to the publick power, liberty and privileges, which before they had lost. As their death signified a being reduced to a kind of servile state, a state of Slavery, so their Resurrection implies their being

being restored to a state of liberty and power again. And to call this a Resurrection, is but according to the propheticall stile of old. The great change which God purposed to make in the condition of the whole House of Israel, by delivering them out of Captivity, Slavery and a servile state, and by restoring them to their own Land, and to their ancient Liberties and Priviledges, is described as if it were a Resurrection from Death to Life. When he promised to do this for them, it is by promising to open their Graves for them, and to bring them out of their Graves, *Ezek. 37. 11, 12, 13, 14.* This I doubt not is the general meaning of this Parable touching the Resurrection of the Witnesses, in which Expositors do accord.

But the great question is, to what *time* this Resurrection of the Witnesses does belong: and whether by it we are to understand the Witnesses, being by the Reformation restored to those liberties of publick worship, and those

those publick Offices and Employments, both in Church and State, out of which they had been forceably kept above a thousand years; or whether by this Resurrection of theirs, is not meant their being restored to those Liberties, Priviledges, and publick Offices and Employments which they had held and enjoyed a long time, *by vertue of the Reformation*, until they shall be forceably deprived of them by a new attempt, hostilely managed by the Beast, to recover what he had lost by that Reformation. This is the true state of the question.

And that we are to understand this Resurrection of the Witnesses in this latter sence, and not in the former, will appear by this. The Reformation fell out long before the time prefixed for the Witnesses finishing their testimony: But their Resurrection here spoken of is not to fall out till *after* they have finished their testimony, or are about to finish it. The War of the Beast against the Witnesses,

ses, by which they will be overcome, is said to be when they *shall have finished* their testimony; and yet this Resurrection is not to be till three propheticall days and an half *after* they are overcome and kill'd by that War. And though we should begin the account of the Witnesses twelve hundred and sixty years mournful Prophecy, so early as the year 397. yet the Reformation would be found to fall out 140. years before the Witnesses were to finish that prophecy of theirs. But if we begin not that account until the year 457. or till some years after (which upon several account I take to be the truer Epocha, the time of the Witnesses Prophecy, and the times of the Beast, being some time since expired, according to the first account, which I think shows it not to be right) we shall find, that the Reformation has fallen out 200. years or more before the end of the time of their mournful prophecy. Either of these computations make too great a distance between the time in which

which the one did fall out, or the other is to fall out, for any Man, on any probable ground to conclude the Reformation and this Resurrection of the Witnesses to be one and the same thing.

As for that Plea (which is made use of to avoid the force of this Argument) which would insinuate as if the Witnesses, finishing their testimony, signifies no more than their performing or declaring their testimony, in which sence they have been finishing their testimony all along their 1260. years Prophecy, I have answered it before. And indeed it looks but oddly to say they were finishing their testimony as soon as they began it.

But another argument which does notably evince, that neither the War of the Beast, nor the death of the Witnesses, nor their Resurrection *here spoken of*, did precede or go before the Reformation, or accompany it, but that they all are to follow after it, is taken from the little or short time
here

here set down, between the death of the Witnesses by the War, and their Resurrection after it. It is said of the Witnesses, *Ver. 9.* That their dead Bodies should be seen three days and an half, and not suffered to be put in Graves. And then in *Ver. 11, 12.* It's said, that *after* three days and an half, the Spirit of life from God entred into them, and they stood upon their feet. Upon which a great Voice from Heaven said unto them, Come up hither, and that they ascended in a Cloud. So that between their Death and Resurrection, we see there is to be but three dayes and an half.

Now then, if we understand the Death of those that shall rise, and their Resurrection it self in a political sence, as it's agreed we must, Then it follows necessarily, that these Witnesses were by their political death, deprived of their Liberties, Privileges, and publick Offices, but three days and an half before they were restored to them again by their Resur-
F rection.

rection. And if so, then the War and the political Death of the Witnesses here spoken of, cannot be that War, or that political Death the Witnesses suffered by it before the Reformation. For by that War and Death the Witnesses were kept out of their Liberties, Privileges, and publick Offices for a thousand years before the Reformation: Whereas by this War and Death the Witnesses are to be deprived of those Liberties and Offices but three years and a half from the time they had enjoyed them under the Reformation. This is all plain, easy, and unforced.

But to evade the force of such like reasoning, some would persuade us to understand by the three days and a half here, three times and an half, or the time, times and half a time in *Daniel*, though they grant the three days and an half thus understood, would be equal in length of time to the 1260. days Prophecy of the Witnesses.

But to make three days and a half

to

to signify such a length of time as we understand by a time, times, and half a time, and by 1260. dayes of the Witnesses prophesying, is quite beside the prophetick stile of this Book, which never uses to signifie more than so many years by so many days. And it is moreover a way of interpretation which cannot be justified by any one like instance or example throughout the whole Bible: and therefore to be looked upon as wholly precarious.

But to have said either here or elsewhere for a Time, and Times and half a Time, Three years and a half, had been quite out of the road of the prophetick stile which never names a year for a year of years; saith Dr. H. More, Arith. Apoc. p. 367. And if the prophetick stile never names a year for a year of years; much less as every ones reason will suggest, does it name a day for a year of years; and if it never does so, then it does not so in this place.

It would have sounded harsh to the common sense of men to have said

80 *A Discourse of the Nature*

the Bodies of the slain Witnesses lay three years and an half unburied in the street of the great City, which yet is the inward sense of this parabolical Vision. And therefore we see the same prophetick figure in speaking is here made use of as it is in other places in this Book, when so many years are signified by so many days. But who would ever imagine, that the pith or pulp contained should as much exceed the rine, containing it in measure, as 1260. years exceeds three days and a half? And therefore that so many years of years should be signified by so many days, exceeds all Example in Scripture, and consequently all rational belief. Such a sense then put upon the Witnesses lying unburied three days and a half, which cannot be maintained but upon the authority of such an incredible Paradox, does sufficiently evince that not to be the true sense and meaning of the words.

But besides, if it could be granted (which it cannot) that the three days and

and Order of Occurrences. 81

and a half here signifies the same length of time, which a time, times, and half a time does, or which 1260. days in the Witnesses Prophecy does; yet this would not prove the Reformation to be at the same in the which the Witnesses are said to rise, or to be one and the same thing with their Resurrection, but a long time after it, and at a great distance from it. For it is *after* the three days and an half in which the Witnesses are said to lie dead, that they are said to rise; and so it will be *after* the three times and a half, before they shall rise, though the three days and a half should signifie such a length of time. And if so, the Reformation would be so far from being *after* the time, times, and half a time, as that it would be 200 years before the end of them, or according to their own account 140. years before it, as I have show'd before. And this distance between the one and the other, is too great ever to reconcile them, and to make them meet in one point of time. And to

think to solve this difficulty by saying the half time became *current* before the Reformation, and that therefore the Reformation may be said to be after it, is to prove one doubtful thing by another as doubtful as it self. For I take what has been said, and may further be said to prove, that the Reformation began a considerable time before the half time became current, is of much more weight than what is argued to the contrary. But if it were not, yet if the Reformation were but 140. years before the end of the time, times, and half a time, it would be too long in all reason to hold true, in saying it was *after it*. This small wire is too weak for the weight of the whole matter in question to be hung upon it, which yet as we see in the issue it is.

For to assert the Prophecy of the rising of the Witnesses after three times and a half, was fulfilled by the Reformation, though that took place 140. years before the end of the three times and a half, and to do it upon
this

this ground, because the rest of the time was then running on, is all one in reality, as to say, the Prophecy of the holy Cities being trodden under foot 42. Months was fulfilled, when it had been so but 37. Months and 10. Days, or as it would be to say, the Vision of the Witnesses prophesying in Sackcloth 1260. days, was fulfilled, when they had done so but 1129. days; for the full time of these was at these times running on as well as the full time of the other was at the Reformation. And if to assert the latter would be highly unreasonable, then to assert the former cannot be less. We may notionally divide three times and a half into seven semi-times; but when we have done so, we cannot upon any good grounds, improve such division to any other use than the phrase three times and a half serves to. For I could never understand, that the three times and an half in the prophecies, were designed to set forth the several different events which were to fall out in

those different parts of time ; but only to show for how long time in the whole the things to which those times relate, should continue. As for dividing the three times and half a time into seven half times, and then to make half a time a *unite*, it is incongruous to the Text, in which if we will find an unite, one of the three times must be it. For half of one of these times will no more make an unite, than half of one will make one. I might observe, that to make the three times and an half in *Daniel* to be a more authentick rule of computation than the Beasts 42 Months, or the Witnesses mournful prophecy 1260. days, which are all synchronal, is contrary to a received rule for interpreting Scripture, which is to interpret passages in the Old Testament by what is said of the same things in the new. It is usually God's method in revealing his mind to proceed from that which is less perfect to that which is more so. And how should we have been sure that *Daniel's* time, times,

times, and half a time, had not signified four or five prophetic years and an half ; if that of the Beasts 42. Months, and the Witnesses 1260. days, had not enlightened it, as synchronizing with it.

It is yet once more objected, That if the Church of God shall at any time be reduced to so very low a condition as is represented by the Witnesses being slain, and lying three days and a half unburied, it is no ways likely it should recover out of it again in so short a time as three years and an half ; and for that reason, we may well think a longer time is intended by three days and an half in this place.

To which I answer, That if we were assured, that Almighty God in effecting this alteration, were likely to proceed in such a leisurely motion of providence as he is wont to do in ordinary cases, this objection would be considerable. But since it is said, that in the same hour in which the Witnesses are said to arise and to ascend,

ascend, there was a great Earthquake, and a tenth part of the City fell, and seven thousand men, or names of men, were slain in the Earthquake; and that the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of Heaven, as it follows, *ver.* 13. it argues, that God will bring this sudden and great alteration to pass in some *extraordinary* way. For an *Earthquake* is not *ordinary* and common, much less a *great Earthquake*, which yet is to fall out at the same time. By which probably less cannot be meant than great shakings, if not over-turnings in the Nations and places where the Witnesses shall then be. And more particularly the Text tells us, that in this Earthquake a tenth part of the City fell, *viz.* of that City which in *ver.* 8. is spiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*. Which must denote doubtless the falling off of a considerable part of the Beasts Dominion from him; or the fall of *Rome* it self, as Mr. Mede thinks, as being now but a tenth part of what it was when St. John had this

this Vision. And if so, this fall of a tenth part of the City, may be the same with the pouring out the fifth Vial upon the Seat or Throne of the Beast. However let this fall of a tenth part of the City signifie what it will, the Earthquake, with its Concomitants will produce these two effects.

First, the slaying of 7000. names of men, or men of name, which can signifie no less than a political death of great numbers of such men, that is, the loss of their Offices and dignities; for in such a sence the Witnesses had been slain.

Secondly, This Earthquake and the concomitants and effects of it, will so affect the remnant of the people which were not politically slain, as to cause them to give glory to the God of Heaven; that is, by their repentance and conversion, as may probably be presumed, and by acknowledging Gods special hand, showing it self in such great and sudden turns in publick affairs, in favour of his Church. These

These extraordinary actings of the Divine Providence considered, it is not so difficult a thing to conceive how so great a deliverance may be wrought for the Church in so short a time, as the objection represents it. Sure I am it's a very easie thing with God to accomplish so great a work in so little time, if he intends it. And what does he less than tell us he intends it by this prophecy concerning it?

Besides, when it's said of the Witnesses, that their dead Bodies should lie in the *street* of the great City, spiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*, and which after three days and an half, should there rise again, it begets a question, whether the slaughter and resurrection of the Witnesses here foretold, should be general, and in all places of the Empire where any good Christians are, or whether only in some eminent place or part of it; for we see it is to fall out but in the *street* of the great City; and it may well be thought such a great City as this,

this, has more streets than one in it. And if this slaughter and resurrection of the Witnesses should prove to fall out but in some one eminent place or part of the Empire, or Papal Jurisdiction, then it will be yet more easie to conceive how so great an alteration in the outward condition of the Church, as the Resurrection of the Witnesses imports, may possibly be brought to pass in so short a time as is signified by three days and an half. It is foretold, that the ten Horns of the Beast, or the ten Kings signified thereby, shall hate the Whore, and make her desolate and naked. And who knows but that this Prediction may in great part be fulfilled in this juncture of time, as well, if not rather, than at any other: especially considering, that a tenth part of that great City is to fall at the same time. And if these things should chance to fall out but in some eminent place of the Empire, we cannot reasonably conceive otherwise than that such an alteration in the Empire it self, must needs make a sudden

sudden alteration in the Witnesses Case and in the state of the Church. After the Protestant Party in Germany had been brought into a very low condition in the beginning of the year 1547. there was such a wonderful alteration of it in three years and an half, as tempted Mr. *Brightman* to take that for the fulfilling of this prophecy of the Witnesses Resurrection, after they had been made a mocking stock by their Enemies three years and an half. This instance however shows how possible it is for a wonderful alteration to be made in the state of the Church in three year and an halfs time. When the great Harlot shall say in her heart, I sit as a Queen, and shall see no sorrow, it's said, therefore shall her plagues come in *one day*, *Rev.* 18. 7, 8. Nay at *v.* 10. in *one hour* is thy Judgment come, *v.* 17. for in *one hour* so great riches is come to nought, and *v.* 19. for in *one hour* is she made desolate. These passages bespeak great alterations to be made in a little time in its season.

It

It follows *Ver.* 14. *The second wo is past, and behold the third wo cometh quickly.* The second wo is past, that is, the wo of the sixth Trumpet, for the sixth Trumpet is the second wo-Trumpet. And in saying this wo is past just upon the close of the foresaid Vision of the Resurrection of the Witnesses and its concomitants, its plain this Trumpet, and the wo of it, were not past till these were past. And if this last Vision of the Resurrection of the Witnesses, and what fell out with it the same hour, were part of this second wo, as undoubtedly they were, Then so were all the foregoing Visions which contain matter of wo to the Bestians; they were so many bitter ingredients, which with the first and these last, do constitute and make up this second wo, which began *Chap.* 9. 13. and ends at the 13. *ver.* of this *Chap.* The principal parts of which wo, as relating to the Western Empire, are the Reformation, the plagues of many of the Vials, the Resurrection of the Witnesses, the Earthquake

Earthquake and fall of a tenth part of the City. And to think what befel the Eastern Empire by the Turkish Conquest, did contain all the second wo, and that little or none of it was to fall upon the Western Empire, *Rome*, and its Territories, which was as deeply Criminal as the Eastern, and probably much more, is to fancy a very unlikely thing.

And yet in defence of it it is said that the five former Trumpets had but one Vision a piece belonging to them; and why then should we think any more belongs to this?

To which it's answer'd; The reason why we should think more than one Vision, and so more than one Vision belongs to the sixth Trumpet, is because it is near, if not altogether, as visible in Scripture, that more than one belongs to it, as it is that one does. The Vision of measuring the Temple, of the Witnesses prophesying, of their smiting the Earth with Plagues, of their Resurrection after their slaughter, of the Earthquake and

and fall of a tenth part of the City: if all these should make but one Vision, as doubtless they do more, yet this would prove more than the Vision of the *Euphratean* Horse to belong to the sixth Trumpet. For all these things were shew'd St. *John* after his Vision of the *Euphratean* Horsemen, and before the ending of the sixth Trumpet, which is not till *Ver.* 14. of this *Chap.*

Again, it is insinuated, as if the particulars forenamed should appertain to somewhat else than the sixth Trumpet, because those make many woes; whereas the wo of the sixth Trumpet is but one, it is the second wo in three. The answer to this is, That though the wo of this Trumpet be but one general wo, yet it is such as contains several particular ones in it. The men that were killed by this Turkish Hostility, were killed *by these plagues*, in the plural number, *v.* 20. For first, if the Turkish Conquest by the *Euphratean* Horsemen, had been the whole of the wo.

of the sixth Trumpet, yet that consisted of several distinct woes; as the loss of estate, the loss of liberty, the loss of Power and Government, the loss of Religion in great part, and the loss of Life it self, as to very many. Secondly, The seven plagues of the Vials fall under the sixth or seventh Trumpet, or both: and though they are *more than one*, yet they do but contribute to the making that *one general wo* of the Trumpet under which they fall, they being both wo-Trumpets.

Again, they distinguish between the *Time* of the sixth Trumpet, and the *wo* of it, and insinuate, as if when it's said the second wo is past in this 14. *ver.* the meaning were only to show, that the *Time* of the sixth Trumpet is but then past, when as the wo of that Trumpet was past long before, when the *Euphratean* Horsemen were brought on the Eastern Empire.

But in exprefs contradiction to this insinuation, it is said, not the *Time* of

of the sixth Trumpet is past, but *the second wo is past*: though it's true it implies, that the *Time* of that Trumpet was then past also. But however we see all of the second wo was not past till the *Time* of the sixth Trumpet was past with it. And for what end can we imagine the *Time* of the sixth Trumpet should be continued to its due length, but to attend the finishing and completing the woful Event of that wo-Trumpet?

Proceed we now to the seventh Trumpet, *ver.* 15. But before we come to the words in which the Vision of this seventh Trumpet are exprest, it will be of great use to prepare our way thereto, and for the better understanding the parts and the whole of the Vision it self, to consider what the mighty Angel, in *Chap.* 10. *ver.* 7. hath foretold concerning the proper Event of the Vision of the seventh Trumpet. The words are these. *But in the days of the Voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the Mystery of God shall*

shall be finished, as he hath declared to his Servants the Prophets. In which words, I conceive, that Angel hath foretold, That the proper Event of the seventh Trumpet will be the *finishing of the Mystery of God*, according to what he had before declared to his Servants the Prophets. If then we can understand what this *mystery* of God is here spoken of, and what the *finishing* of it is, we may then know what the Event of the seventh Trumpet will be.

The mystery of God here mentioned, and which has been declared to his Servants the Prophets, in all probability will consist mainly in these two things. First in bringing down the Enemies of Christ, and of his Church: or the taking the power of ruling and bearing sway in the World, wholly and irrecoverably out of their hands, and the putting it into the hands of those who shall then be of the Church. Secondly, In the great enlargement of the Kingdom of Christ in the World, by the Conversion

sion of the Nation of the Jews, and by bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles. For these two things have been abundantly declared by God to the Prophets, and to us by them, and that in somewhat a mysterious stile too: for which reason the more obscure revelation of these things may well be called the *mystery* of God. These two things were revealed unto the Prophet *Daniel*, by revealing to him *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*, concerning the Image, *Chap. 2. 34, 35.* *Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the Image on his feet that were of iron, and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the Image, became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth.* This is afterwards interpreted, *Ver. 44, 45.* *In the days of those Kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom*

Kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. For as much as thou sawest, that the stone was cut out of the Mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the King what shall come to pass hereafter, &c. The like we have in another of Daniel's Visions, Chap. 7. 26, 27. and in many other places in other of the Prophets.

And the *finishing* this mystery of God is, that which is like to be the Event of the seventh Trumpet; which finishing will probably consist in the total accomplishment of the Prophecies touching this Mystery of God. Not the fulfilling them in part, as before they had been fulfilled; but it is the *finishing* the consummation of this mystery that will be the Event of the seventh Trumpet.

For otherwise this mystery hath
already

already been accomplished to a degree in the Conversion of many of the Gentiles, and joining them to, and making them one body with the believing Jews which first received the Gospel. For the doing of this was a mystery foretold by the Prophets, as St. Paul calls it, *Eph. 3. 4, 9.* that is, it was a thing understood but by few till it was accomplished. But this was not the *finishing* this mystery of God, that being reserved to the Times of the seventh Trumpet, as it's probable, when the Nation of the Jews which has long been rejected, shall be converted to the Christian Faith, and be brought into the Church. And then the Nations of the Gentiles in their *fullness* will also be brought into the Church. This is yet a *mystery* as St. Paul calls it, *Rom. 11. 25, 26.* But the bringing these things to pass will be the *finishing* of this mystery.

And the Prophecies likewise of taking the power of Rule and Government out of the hands of the Churches
G 4 Enemies,

Enemies, and putting it into the hands of the Church, has in several Nations been fulfilled already in part; as in the days of *Constantine* the first Christian Emperour, and of his Successors; and likewise by the happy Reformation begun by *Luther*. But all this has not yet been the *finishing* this part of the mystery of God declared to the Prophets, but the finishing of this is reserved to the Times of the seventh Trumpet, when the *Times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled*, as our Saviour's phrase is, *Luke 21. 24.* that is, when their time of Ruling shall have an end. The same thing which *St. Paul* calls the putting down all Rule, all Authority and Power; meaning of the Enemies of Christ and his Church; for of those he there speaks, *1 Cor.*

15. 24.

Having premised these things from the Angels words in *Chap. 10. 7.* we are, I hope, the better prepared to consider and understand the Vision of the seventh Trumpet it self, as agreeing with what the Angel has foretold concerning it.

Ver.

Ver. 15. The seventh Angel sounded, and there were great Voices in Heaven, saying, the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. Behold here an exact agreement between what is here declared in Vision to have come to pass upon the sounding of the seventh Angel, and between what the mighty Angel foretold would be finished in the days of the seventh Angel, when he should begin to sound, to wit, that part of the mystery of God which consists in the last and greatest enlargement of the Church and Kingdom of Christ upon Earth. For the first thing we meet with after the seventh Angel has sounded, is we see a Declaration by great Voices from Heaven, saying, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ.* And I have formerly show'd, that the Eventual accomplishment of the Visions of the Trumpets, belong to the times of those Trumpets under which the Visions are show'd or seen. And I

the

the rather take notice of it again here, to show, that the conversion of the Kingdoms of the World here spoken of, cannot be meant of any former conversion of them, before the times of the seventh Trumpet, as the Conversion of Nations by the Reformation was.

Ver. 16, 17. *And the 24. Elders which sat before God on their Seats, fell upon their Faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord, God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned: That is, his Ruling or Governing Power, his Power of Reigning. And his taking this unto himself at this time, implies, that until then he had in great part suffered others, such as were his Enemies, to exercise that Power, and to make use of it against him, and against his faithful Subjects. But upon this seventh Angels sounding, the time will be come when he will wholly take it out of their hands into his own, and will thenceforth Reign*

Reign himself by betrusting the exercise of that power only in such hands as will use it for him, and for the good of all his good and Loyal Subjects. This other part of the mystery of God will at this time be *finished*, which had been begun long before.

Ver. 18. *And the Nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that destroy the Earth. The Nations, (or Gentiles, as others read it) were angry; they were sore vexed, exasperated and enraged, to find themselves thus going down, and those exalted into power and dignity, over whom they had been wont contemptuously to domineer. And thy wrath is come: that is, the time of showing his wrath will be then come, by removing those Rulers, and breaking their power to pieces, by which they had oppressed, persecuted, yea Martyr'd*

tyr'd Christ's best Subjects. *And the time of the dead that they should be judged.* That is, the time of judging their Cause will be then come, whose blood had been unjustly and cruelly shed, and of calling their Enemies to account for it. *And that thou shouldst give reward to thy Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear thy name, both small and great;* to wit, in their Successors, who shall then reap the fruit of the labours and sufferings of those their Predecessors in the same Cause, who transmitted down to them that Truth which now will exalt them, even in this World, who shall imbrace it. And indeed the honour and renown of those who had suffered as evil doers, as their Adversaries would needs have it, will now at this time have a kind of Resurrection, when their cause, for which they suffered, is Crowned with a lasting Victory and Honour. The holy Apostles and Prophets, though so long since dead, will be avenged by God at last on *Babylon* in her

her downfall. *Rejoice over her thou Heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you on her,* Rev. 18. 20. And if it be matter of rejoicing to them in being done on their account, and for the sake of their sufferings, then it will be matter of reward to them. God will then bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon day: which till then had been obscured and kept under a dark Cloud by the Adversaries, by representing them as evil doers, and as having deservedly suffered what they had inflicted on them. *And shouldst destroy them which destroy the Earth, or corrupt the Earth,* as it is in the margin. That is, by an utter and final destruction of that power of theirs by which they had corrupted the World by abominable Idolatries, Superstitions, and damnable Doctrines, and destroy'd it by unjust Wars, Massacres, and cruel Slaughters of Innocent Men.

Ver. 19. *And the Temple of God was opened*

opened in Heaven; and there was seen in his Temple the Ark of his Testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail. The very same five things here mentioned, are to fall out upon the pouring out the seventh Vial, *viz.* Voices, Thunders, Lightnings, a great Earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the Earth, and great Hail, every Stone about the weight of a talent, *Ch. 16. 18. 21.* Which argues, that the effects of the seventh Vial will accomplish and bring to pass this part of the Event of the seventh Trumpet. And as upon the sounding the seventh Trumpet the Mystery of God will be *finished*, so upon the pouring out the last Vial a Voice out of the Throne says, *It is done*, which signifies the same thing, *Ch. 16, 17.* And that these Voices, Thunderings, &c. are indications of the great mutations that will then be in the World in Kingdoms and States, and the terrible overthrow and downfall of the Enemies of Christ and his Church,

Church, appears by what is said to follow upon them, *Ver. 19, 20.* to wit, the falling of the Cities of the Nations, great *Babylon's* coming in remembrance before God, to give unto her the Cup of the Wine of the fierceness of his wrath, the Islands flying away, and the Mountains being not found.

And thus we see it here plainly represented in Vision, that the subject matter of the Event of the seventh Trumpet, or that of which it will consist, is the last the great and full enlargement of the Church, and the final and total subduing the power of her Enemies, by which it had been hindered. All which, as now it more fully appears, was signified by the finishing of the Mystery of God in the days of the seventh Angel, when he should sound his Trumpet, as was foretold by the mighty Angel, *Ch. 10.*

The most famous enlargement of the Church, in the which the Kingdoms of this World will become the Kingdoms

doms of the Lord, and of his Christ, is we see first represented in the Vision of the seventh Trumpet: Not perhaps because this will first take place in its perfection, before the power of the Churches Enemies is fully broken and subdued; but because that is the main and principal thing designed under this Trumpet, and the extraordinary and total subduing of the Enemies of Christ but as subservient thereunto. And in all probability the visible and notorious appearance of the hand of Almighty God out of favour to his Church, in breaking in pieces all the power of her Enemies by extraordinary acts of Providence, will be one special means of bringing in the Nations of the World into the Church, as I have showed elsewhere.

FINIS.